



Your Guide to Getting Married at St Isidore Catholic Church

<u>Contents:</u>	<u>Page:</u>
<u>Scheduling your Wedding at St Isidore Church</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Checklist for Engaged Couples</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Documentation</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Marriage Preparation</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Fees</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Convalidation</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Cohabiting</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Previous Marriages</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Spiritual Development</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Wedding Rehearsal</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Wedding Ceremony</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>After Your Wedding</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Cancellation Policy</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>More Information</u>	<u>10</u>

Congratulations on your engagement!

By choosing to be married in the Catholic Church you recognize that marriage is more than just a legal contract, but a covenant. This covenant is a permanent union of persons capable of knowing and loving each other through Christ.

Preparing for marriage is an involved process. Not only must the church confirm that you are free to marry, but you must discern that this is the vocation that God is calling you to. Marriage is one of the most holy vocations and preparation is taken seriously.

"The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament." CCC 1601

"The sacrament of Matrimony signifies the union of Christ and the Church. It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved his Church; the grace of the sacrament thus perfects the human love of the spouses, strengthens their indissoluble unity, and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life." CCC 1661

Scheduling your Wedding at St Isidore Church

- To be married at St Isidore Catholic Church one or both persons of the engaged couple must be a practicing Catholic. Both parties must be free to marry in the Catholic Church.
- A wedding is only scheduled once the couple has met with the Marriage Coordinator, filled out the initial paperwork, and paid the \$100 deposit. The wedding can be scheduled as soon as 6 months after the date of that meeting.
- Weddings are held on Saturdays at 12pm and 2pm (weddings are not scheduled during Lent).
- Wedding ceremonies may be celebrated during the week but rarely and only under special circumstances.
- Wedding ceremonies can be in English, Spanish, or Bilingual.
- A priest from St Isidore will be assigned to the wedding ceremony. If the couple would like a priest from another parish to preside at their wedding, the couple may discuss with the Marriage Coordinator.

Checklist for Engaged Couples

- Pre-Marriage Testimony - Form A, Bride
- Pre-Marriage Testimony - Form A, Groom
- Witness Testimonies for Bride - Form B's - 2 witness testimonies are needed
- Witness Testimonies for Groom - Form B's - 2 witness testimonies are needed
- Bride Baptism Certificate (newly issued with notations for other sacraments)
- Bride Confirmation Certificate
- Groom Baptism Certificate (newly issued with notations for other sacraments)
- Groom Confirmation Certificate
- Marriage License – either a new marriage license from the county, or for civilly married couples your civil marriage license certificate
- Other documents may be necessary for prior marriages or dispensations
- Fully Engaged Mentor Couple Sessions
- Group Classes
- Couples in Cana Pan de Vida Retreat Weekend
- Payment
- Wedding Rehearsal the Thursday or Friday before the ceremony

Documentation

Pre-Marriage Testimonies (Form A)

Couples must meet with the Marriage Coordinator at least 6 months prior to their wedding date. At that meeting, the Marriage Coordinator will discuss the marriage preparation program and fill out the first paperwork: Form A Pre-Marriage Testimonies for both the bride and groom. Couples are asked to pay a \$100 non-refundable deposit to start the marriage preparation process and schedule the wedding ceremony.

Witness Testimonies (Form B)

Both the bride and groom are required to provide two witnesses each to give a testimony to their readiness to enter the Sacrament of Marriage. The testimony form is filled out by the Marriage Coordinator. Witnesses must be individuals who know you very well. Close relatives or friends you have known since high school are acceptable. Your witness must call the parish office to schedule an appointment for their testimony. Witness testimonies take about 15 minutes to complete.

Sacrament Certificates

Both the bride and the groom must obtain and newly issued baptism certificate from the church where they were baptized. The baptism certificate must be dated within 6 months of the date of the Form A and must include notations for the other sacraments.

Both the bride and the groom must obtain the original or a copy of their confirmation certificate from the church where they were confirmed.

Marriage License

Engaged couples must apply for a marriage license within 90 days of the wedding ceremony. That license must be brought to the parish office prior to the ceremony. On the date of the ceremony the priest, bride, groom, and witnesses all sign the license which is then mailed to the county clerk's office. It is up to the married couple to apply for an official certificate with the county after the wedding ceremony.

For couples who are already civilly married, we need an official certified copy of your marriage license certificate. In the state of California both the license and certificate are one document, but in other states like Nevada they are two separate documents.

Other Documents

If either the bride or the groom have been previously married it is required that we obtain a Final Decree of Nullity from the Tribunal for the prior marriage. If the prior marriage ended in death, then a death certificate is required.

If either the bride or the groom is not baptized Catholic, then a dispensation must be granted. An Application for Matrimonial Dispensation must be filled out and sent to the Tribunal along with an application fee.

Marriage Preparation

St Isidore's Marriage Preparation Program includes 3 Phases. All 3 phases must be completed prior to the ceremony but do not need to be completed in order.

Phase 1: Fully Engaged Program with a Mentor Couple

Engaged couples take an online pre-marriage inventory then meet with a St Isidore Parish Mentor Couple 3-5 times in the mentor couple's home. The number of sessions depends on the couple's understanding of the topics.

Phase 2: Group Classes

Engaged couples are required to attend 4 group classes. These classes are held 3 times a year.

Class 1 – Engagement Party – couples get to know each other and see a presentation on the Sacrament of Marriage

Class 2 – Introduction to Natural Family Planning – why we practice it

Class 3 – Introduction to Natural Family Planning – what it is

Class 4 – Liturgy Planning and presentation by priest on the sacrament of reconciliation

Phase 3: Pan de Vida Couples in Cana Retreat Weekend

Engaged couples are required to attend a weekend retreat held at St Isidore parish. This retreat is typically held in the fall.

The cost of the retreat is included in the marriage preparation fees.

Fees

The suggested donation to cover the cost of the both the preparation and ceremony is \$500. For couples being prepared at St Isidore but getting married at another parish the fee for the preparation is \$250.

A \$100 non-refundable deposit is required to start the marriage preparation process.

Payments can be made in the office with cash, check, or card. They can also be made on our website (stisidore-yubacity.org) with a card or bank account.

Other fees may be required if documentation is mailed to the Tribunal. These fees are due at the time the documents are sent.

Fees are subject to change and do not include musician. You may choose to give the celebrant a gift for his time, but it's optional and not required.

Convalidation

Catholics who exchange vows in the presence of ministers from other religious traditions or civil officials are not considered validly married in the eyes of the Catholic Church. This may seem hard to hear, especially for couples who have been civilly married for many years. But the Catholic Church teaches

that marriage is much more than a government contract, it is an indissoluble covenant the bride and the groom make with God. It is just as important and significant as the church's other sacraments.

Couples who are civilly married and wish to have their marriage raised to the dignity of a sacrament must go through the Marriage Preparation program to have their marriage "convalidated." The couple follows the same steps as engaged couples. The program the couple will follow with their mentor couple will look a little different as they are already living together as husband and wife.

Cohabiting

Prior to receiving the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, it is not appropriate to live together. It is important that couples who are currently cohabitating find a way of returning to a single lifestyle until their wedding day.

For couples who have children together, it may not be in the best interest of the children to live apart. In these circumstances it is important to discuss with the Marriage Coordinator or priest the best way to spend their time together prior to their wedding day.

Previous Marriages

If either of the engaged persons have been married previously, a Final Decree of Nullity must be in hand in order for a future marriage to occur. Your Parish Advocate will discuss the proper documentation and time frame to obtain a Final Decree of Nullity.

Spiritual Development

An important part of your Marriage Preparation is attending mass together. As Catholics, it is our obligation to attend mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation. Even if one of you is not Catholic, it is good practice to spend this time together and discuss how you will be passing on your faith to your children. Please see the church website for updated mass times.

It is also important for the bride and groom to go to Confession. You should be in a state of grace when receiving the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony so you must go to confession within one month of your wedding ceremony.

Another great practice for engaged couples is to attend Eucharistic Adoration together. St Isidore's church is open 24-hours a day, 7 days a week for Eucharistic Adoration. You may sign up on our website (stisidore-yubacity.org) to spend an hour in adoration or just stop by when you have time. It is a great way to develop your prayer life together.

Wedding Rehearsal

Wedding Rehearsals take place the Thursday or Friday evening before the wedding ceremony inside the Parish Hall (not inside the church). One of our wedding coordinator volunteers will lead the rehearsal and help at the ceremony as well. Anyone in your wedding party (parents of bride and groom, bridesmaids, groomsmen, padrinos, padrinas, etc) need to attend the rehearsal. Please be on time for the rehearsal.

Wedding Ceremony

1. Mass or Liturgy of the Word

- When two practicing Catholics marry, they celebrate their wedding ceremony within a mass. Since communion is a union of those who share the same faith, Catholic practice allows holy communion only to those who are baptized Catholic. (Form 1 in “Together for Life” book)
- For wedding ceremonies between a Catholic and a non-Catholic, a Liturgy of the Word is celebrated and instead of a full mass. Liturgy of the Eucharist (communion) is not celebrated during the ceremony. (Form 3 in “Together for Life” book)

2. Selections

- Wedding ceremony selections are made from the “Together for Life” book.
- Please use the “Together for Life” book to fill out the Wedding Selections form and bring to the office 1 week prior to the wedding ceremony.

3. Readers

- The wedding ceremony can include up to four readers:
- Old testament reading
- Responsorial Psalm (if there is no musician)
- New testament reading
- Universal Prayer
- A reader may do more than one or all of the readings. The reader should be Catholic and be able to speak in a loud and clear voice. Please give the reader(s) a copy of the reading(s) to practice ahead of time.

4. Chairs

- Two chairs will be at the front of the church for the bride and groom to sit during the readings. They will start out of the way in front of the front pews. It is the job of the maid of honor and best man (or other 2 people of your choosing) to move the chairs to the middle and then out of the way when not in use.
- The chairs will be provided, you may decorate with cloth, flowers, etc. or you may bring your own chairs.

5. Rings

Rings are necessary and they are part of the ceremony. Please do not force the rings onto the finger of your fiancé. It makes for an awkward moment.

6. Arras and Lasso

Arras and Lasso are permitted but they are not necessary. The priest will invite the persons with the rings, arras, rosaries, bible, and lasso to come up at the appropriate time. The Lasso will come after the “Our Father” and just before the nuptial blessing. Please make sure that all items to be blessed are out of their boxes.

7. Wedding Music

- If you would like to have music for your wedding it is your responsibility to secure the musicians. Our choirs are available, and we can provide you with their phone numbers. Payment to the musicians is your responsibility.
- All the music must be sacred and liturgical. It must come from an approved hymnal/ liturgical music book.
- “The Wedding March” is not permitted. Pachelbel's Canon in D is permissible.
- We cannot permit recorded music. Mariachis are fine.
- The choir, or musical group must use our sound system.
- If you would like to place a bouquet of flowers in front of the Blessed Virgin, please ask the music group to play a song to the Blessed Virgin after the first song for communion but still during the time of communion. When you hear the song you should go place the bouquet in front of the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

8. Photography

- Photographers are permitted to take photos and video throughout the ceremony.
- Photographers should never direct the actions of the people during the liturgy. For example, when you are placing the bouquet of flowers in front of the Blessed Virgin, the photographer should not slow you down by walking in front of you nor should they ask you to stop and pose.
- Photographers should not cause a distraction.
- Photographers should never walk into the sanctuary or ascend the steps in front of the sanctuary to get a shot. This includes the areas in front of our Lady of Guadalupe and the area in front of the statue of St. Joseph.
- Photographers’ bright light should not be pointed at the priest when he is talking.
- Pictures with the priest after the Liturgy should be taken right away.
- The wedding party may take pictures in front of the sanctuary/altar, but they should not walk into the sanctuary.

9. Witnesses

- Your witnesses must be present for the entire ceremony. They do not need to be the same witnesses who gave the witness testimonies. They do not need to be Catholic.

- The witnesses must come to the sacristy to fill out the license or the Wedding Convalidation Form right after the ceremony.

10. If your marriage requires a State of California License, YOU MUST BRING IT TO THE OFFICE AT LEAST THREE WEEKS PRIOR TO YOUR WEDDING.

11. Decorations

- You may decorate the church.
- Please do not tear off or damage the paint of walls and pews.
- Please do not block the view of the altar with arches.
- Please do not have things thrown that are too hard to clean. This includes glitter, rice, or real flower petals. Only artificial petals are allowed.
- You must remove all decorations and wedding material immediately following the ceremony.

12. Bride's Dress

The brides dress must be appropriate for Church. A white dress is worn as a sign of purity so you will want to make sure that your dress does not reveal too much. Make sure you can comfortably stand, sit, and kneel in the dress you choose. Bare shoulders should be covered by a shawl or bolero jacket.

13. Alcohol

Consumption of Alcohol before the wedding is not permissible. If a priest suspects either the bride or groom is intoxicated he cannot celebrate the wedding ceremony.

14. Time

Please arrive one half hour before the ceremony. **Do not be late!** There is a bride's room available for you to wait in. If the priest has an appointment immediately following your wedding or, if there is an event scheduled in the church immediately following your time slot, you run the risk of having your event cancelled. Please do not keep your guests or the priest waiting.

After your Wedding Day

Your Catholic Marriage Certificate will be mailed to you about a week after your ceremony. Your marriage license certificate that you signed after the ceremony will stay and the church and we will mail to the county clerk's office. It is your responsibility to contact the county clerk's office after the ceremony to obtain an official civil marriage license certificate.

Cancellation Policy

If you cancel or wedding ceremony you will forfeit the \$100 deposit. If it is determined by you or by our clergy that you need to postpone or cancel your wedding ceremony, or if you fail to complete the marriage preparation requirements, the wedding ceremony will be cancelled.

More Information

More information about the Diocese of Sacramento Marriage Preparation Policy can be found at: www.scd.org/engaged

More information on the Catholic Church's Teaching about the Sacrament of Matrimony can be found at: <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/matrimony>